

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Chief Deputy Whip Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) issued the following statement after Speaker Pelosi responded to a letter from GOP leaders requesting the approval of low-cost video-conferencing software, such as Skype, under House rules. Congressman McCarthy has been tasked to lead an effort by House Republicans to engage the American people and put forth a positive governing agenda.

"We are happy that the Speaker has agreed to initiate a process that may allow Congress to more readily communicate with the American people. With more people relying on safe and secure social media sites and Americans feeling more disconnected from Congress than ever before, we can no longer afford to drag our feet. Countless private businesses and millions of people across the world safely use low-cost video-conferencing tools such as Skype, and it makes little sense that the House would block their use. As Americans increasingly believe that Washington isn't listening, we should look for all secure ways to open dialogue."

Note:

GOP leaders sent a letter to Speaker Pelosi last week saying in part, Current House rules allow Members of Congress to use taxpayer funds to conduct traditional, often expensive, video teleconferencing activities with their constituents, but forbid them from using Skype – which is practically free – for such activities. We are certain that Skype, an increasingly relevant communication tool for Americans already widely used in the private sector, could be easily implemented in Congress in a manner that would not reduce the security of the House IT infrastructure. With safety and the sharing of ideas in mind, we therefore respectfully request that the use of Skype be permitted under House rules. Rather than lagging behind, let's move one step closer into the future of Congressional communications.

Related:

House Republicans Pursue New Way to Communicate with American People ([April 20, 2010](#))

[Text](#) of April 19, 2010 letter to Speaker Pelosi

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